

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2571

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Transportation, March 03, 2008

Title: An act relating to armed forces and veterans license plates.

Brief Description: Modifying armed forces provisions.

Sponsors: Representatives Seaquist, McCoy, McCune, Conway, Hurst, Haigh, Morrell, Campbell, VanDeWege, Chase, Barlow, Green and Simpson; by request of Department of Veterans Affairs.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/08, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/27/08, 3/3/08 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Haugen, Chair; Marr, Vice Chair; Swecker, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Delvin, Eide, Jacobsen, Kastama, Kauffman, Kilmer, King, Pflug, Sheldon and Spanel.

Staff: Janice Baumgardt (786-7319)

Background: The Department of Licensing (DOL) issues special vehicle license plates that can be used in lieu of standard plates. The DOL issues armed forces special license plates, which are a series of six plates that contain a symbol representing different branches of the armed forces. The special plates are available only to veterans, active duty military personnel, reservists, members of the Washington National Guard, and spouses of deceased veterans. The charge is \$40 above the standard licensing fee for initial issuance, and \$30 above the standard fee for renewal. The DOL also issues decals free of charge to be placed on a license plate indicating the purchaser's military status.

Proceeds from the sale of the armed forces license plates are deposited into the Veterans Stewardship Account (account). The Washington State Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) may also accept grants and gifts to deposit into the account. The account must be used by the DVA for activities that benefit veterans. The DOL issues former prisoner of war special license plates free of charge to veterans who were held captive during a period of war for more than 29 days.

Summary of Bill: References to Washington are deleted when referring to the National Guard special license plate, expanding eligibility to include the National Guard of any state.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In addition to spouses, other family members of living or deceased veterans and current service members may purchase an armed forces special license plate and receive a decal.

The eligibility criteria to receive a prisoner of war special license plate is changed from a veteran who was held captive during a period of war for more than 29 days to a veteran that was held captive and received a prisoner of war medal.

In addition to veterans, families of veterans may receive funds from the account through the DVA.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This changes who is eligible for a prisoner of war specialty plate to match the definition the military has.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Seaquist, prime sponsor; Heidi Audette, Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs.